

**RALEIGH TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
FEBRUARY 14, 2019  
MINUTES**

The Raleigh Transit Authority met on Thursday, February 14, 2019 at 3:30 p.m in the Council Chamber, Raleigh Municipal Building, 222 W. Hargett Street, with the following present:

Jason Horne, presiding  
Danny Coleman  
Ray Magsanoc  
Tolulupe Omokaiye  
Tony Pecoraro  
Nathan Spencer  
Michael Stevenson  
Linda Wire

Staff present: David Eatman, David Walker, Marie Parker

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Horne.

The following items were discussed with actions taken as shown:

**AGENDA – APPROVED AS AMENDED**

Chairman Horne asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Mr. Eatman indicated Section 5310 – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities Program 2019 Calls for Projects will be added as an information item. Mr. Spencer indicated he will discuss a Marketing item. Without objection, the agenda was approved as amended.

**MINUTES – JANUARY 10, 2019 – APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

Members had received copies of the January 10, 2019 minutes in their agenda packets. Mr. Spencer moved approval of the minutes. His motion was seconded by Mr. Stevenson, unanimously passed. Chairman Horne ruled the motion adopted.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **FY20 – DRAFT WORKPLAN – INFORMATION RECEIVED**

Mr. Eatman reported starting February 1, 2019 the region wide work plan became available for public comment through March 1, 2019. He provided an overview of what GoRaleigh will be proposing to implement in FY 20 along with what will be scheduled regionally. Once we have adopted the Wake Transit Plan budget for FY 20 in May or June, before implementation we will follow public participation working with the CACs and others. Mr. Walker advised a link to the work plan is available on the City's Transit site. The proposed bus services expansion plan was reviewed for GoRaleigh, GoCary and GoTriangle including Raleigh routes 20 & 20L, Route 33, Rolesville Express and GoWake. Highlights of the proposed capital investments for GoRaleigh were reviewed including funding for a new ADA facility, funding for an East Raleigh Transit Center, funding for additional expansion and replacement buses, funding for a Mid Town Transit Center, funding for additional new and upgrades to existing bus stops, funding for 5 new upgraded enhanced transfer points, etc. Mr. Pecoraro requested that members receive the dollars involved in these items. Other items included one location for Cross Link Road at Rock Quarry Road where there are 3 shelters at 3 corners and building a 4<sup>th</sup> one that includes things i.e. digital information board serving routes in that location, enhanced lighting, larger shelter seating more riders and a bigger, nicer shelter site. Transit centers would be on lines where we have nicer facilities such as rest rooms, etc. These are funded to have customer service representatives available part of the day. Mr. Walker reviewed additional transit investments including mobile ticketing, bus stop improvements, fare capping, and park and ride at Wake Tech. The Fuquay-Varina Express has a stop at Food Lion on 401 South and required riders to cross the street. Staff has worked with Wake Tech and they will provide space on their property for a bus stop.

Mr. Stevenson requested an update on the new shelter design with Mr. Eatman explaining when we moved forward for the contract to construct it was pulled by the City Council with the intent of getting on the Work Session in January. The agenda filled up for that meeting and staff is looking for an opportunity to bring that before the City Council through either the City manager's Update or get it before the Council and explain the process. The problem when something is brought from concept to design it requires engineering, testing, etc. which takes time. There are a number of parties who have volunteered to accept the facility and staff is looking at opportunities to for forward in the near future. There is no set date for this yet.

Mr. Walker reviewed in detail what is involved in setting the Regional Fare Strategy to be done in the summer of 2019 including the app, how it would work, what would be covered, etc. Longer term investments were reviewed including BRT and Commuter Transit. Comment period for the public was opened on February 1 and ends March 3 but can take comments up to July 1 when the plan is adopted. Funding should be available and ready for implementation of projects in July.

Once this is approved, staff will be going into the community (CACs, etc) with service changes and followed by a public hearing before the authority.

Ms. Omokaiye brought up the difficulty in getting bus operators and how this will be handled in service expansions in the future. She suggested thinking long term noting mechanics and skilled workers are in high demand and how we can tap into military communities as they retire, grooming students in high schools. She stressed the need to think long term about the transit plan and operations and would like to see plans include this if possible.

This item was received as information.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS – RECEIVED**

Clarence Dewberry, Old Deer Trail, indicated drivers create better ridership noting his new route makes him work on the weekend now. Route 24S requires him coming in at 5:40 a.m. He noted on his second trip when he turns off Wake Forest Road to Six Forks there is a day care center. Every day there is a little girl and her father waiting to go into the day care center. The girl will not go in until she waves to the driver. He indicated that is what transit should be about – consistency established over the years. He thanked Travis Hodge who spoke at the last meeting for his comments.

Greg Millhouse, 111 Stonecutter Court, Garner, NC, indicated he was concerned about consistency relating to the January route changes. He took time out to talk to drivers at all levels and all agree they like the way things are flowing. There are some adjustments that need to be made. There have been statements about how the runs have forced particular individuals to go back to work on weekends and disagreed with that. He stated he looked over the list and there were multiple choices. He indicated many drivers don't have the opportunity to come to these meetings and share and noted they have a voice too and should be considered. Changes have to be inclusive at all levels. He indicated Marie and her TransDev Team are very accessible and approachable.

Derick Curtis, 928 Wickerleef Way, Garner, has worked at GoRaleigh 4 years. He indicated when employees give opinions with no sources conflict arises and they cannot effectively do their job. In order to be successful, they have to be sure they are not self-centered and are open to change when it comes. It is acceptable to voice concerns but it should be done with respect for everyone. Drivers serve a community of people depending on their service. Workers should be proud of their service at GoRaleigh and should do what is best and not what is comfortable. He stated this agency is growing and once they adapt to changes, they should resolve the issues together and should be sure all have the same objective and work towards that in unity and with respect.

Sherell Smothers, 130 Saddletree Drive, Franklinton, NC, has worked for GoRaleigh for 7 months which was shortly before the new changes. She has a career in transit and came from Delaware. This is her second company with transit and lives the job. She stated she is anti-union by choice which is an option noting this is where the animosity comes from.

Morris Cooke, 4304 Coburn Place, Raleigh, started with GoRaleigh in 2012 as an operator and he is now a manager. With the general managers before TransDev, operators could not go to them and it was their way or you could go out the door. He indicated the company now is different. He indicated many drivers are afraid to speak up due to retaliation from their peers. He suggested that the authority speak to them one on one which will provide a better perspective of what is going on.

Desmond Ellerbe, 901 Willow Edge Court, Knightdale, NC, has been a driver for different commercial vehicles for 11 years and his family owns a bus company. He has been with GoRaleigh 1 year; however, the job itself is like no other. The opportunity to allow your voice to be heard is there and had talked with Marie several times noting she holds work group meetings so drivers have an opportunity to discuss any issues. He stated there are two sides to every story. He indicated the software which fixed in order to negotiate runs. He cares about the lives of drivers that are adversely impacted. He suggested putting out a survey and get input on what people expect. Once the software is fixed the runs will be something more people will be happy with. He stated he is satisfied with management; however, there are things that can be done differently. We need to think about the future and how to retain drivers. We have to look at money people of the community are investing. He thanked the authority for their time and urged looking into hearing the voices of each and every employee.

Dwight Spencer, 205 Fayetteville Street, Suite 220, stated he is a strong advocate for all drivers. He commended the authority for putting together an ad hoc committee. He attended two great work session. Doing these meetings at a time so everyone can come and talk still remains a fact. Seniority has been taken away from these drivers that is something they earn. He requested giving them back their seniority with years of service which is what these discussions are all about. He suggested looking at the division in this chamber. He stated the general manager brought her people to speak on behalf of management. Leadership is about unity and not division. A company cannot grow with division. The number 1 concern is customer service which has been adversely affected with the new route changes. Drivers make the company. He felt the management company needs to be changed. He noted TransDev management was supposed to be at this meeting. He stated there is a massive transit plan and assured if this is not taken care of, we will go to the chairman of the Wake County Commissioners.

Chairman Horne thanked everyone for speaking and stated the authority members are listening to everyone and are trying to do the right thing and also follow state law. Mr. Coleman suggested changing the time of the committee meetings so more TransDev employees could attend.

### **ENHANCED MOBILITY OF SENIORS & INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM (SECTION 5310) – 2019 CALL FOR PROJECTS – INFORMATION RECEIVED**

James Farrell, Planning Communities, provided a presentation on the 5310 program. Mr. Eatman explained under FTA, GoRaleigh is considered the designated recipient. He explained the difference between direct recipient and designated recipient of these funds and involves the distribution of funds to a number of nonprofits and GoRaleigh.

Mr. Farrell explained this program provides capital and operating grants to nonprofits, public agencies and private operators of public transportation services that meets the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. He reviewed the roles for the FTA, GoRaleigh and CAMPO and what is involved in the Call for Projects. Funding available is currently \$826,047.00. Examples of projects previously funded were reviewed including vehicle purchases, equipment and technology, mobility management, etc. Outreach efforts were reviewed noting there is a list of 200 potential grant applicants contacted by email, workshops in March and a recorded PowerPoint presentation on the GoRaleigh website. The RTA briefing will be on May 9 and will go before the CAMPO Executive Board on May 15 for approval. In response to a question from Ms. Omokaiye, it was noted the geographical areas covered include the Raleigh and Cary urbanized areas. It was pointed out some successful applicants have been highly visible nonprofits that have robust programs. Private providers are eligible and they are included; however, nonprofits have been more successful and has been only 1 private provider application received and the application was incomplete. Discussion followed regarding ways to assist private providers in the completion of applications. Mr. Eatman explained we have approximately 40+ individual companies contacted noting FTA guidance on how funds can be utilized are very specific. Grant workshops are provided as well as outreach. Mr. Coleman indicated when the next budget is done, there should be emphasis on how to get different people to the table and possibly set aside funds to be sure these local companies have better ways to overcome obstacles. He felt leadership and funding to help with this is needed and a line item in the budget is needed for this to work. Mr. Eatman stated there will be a 3/12 workshop which is really important where a lot of information is provided. He encouraged members to advise anyone they feel may be interested.

### **AD HOC COMMITTEE – REPORT RECEIVED**

Chairman Horne reported the committee went through all the comments received and they largely are in four buckets, some the authority can influence and some that can't. The four items relate to

scheduling (run options), GoRaleigh Station heat, mechanical and Route 17. Mr. Stevenson noted when comments were made about seniority and consistency, those are included in scheduling. In regard to scheduling, the authority doesn't have a lot of influence relating to State and Federal laws. He encouraged all partners to work with each other. Sample run cuts will be provided at the end of February and then drivers can discuss what they like. All the authority can do is monitor that situation at this point.

Mr. Coleman stated Mr. Ellerbe gave a great talk. Mr. Coleman indicated the authority got dragged into this because notifications that should have been provided beforehand were not provided. He felt it is important for leadership to come to the table. He stated this is management's job and drivers did not have enough time before the January changes to work out the kinks and timing was not working on our behalf. He stated it appears people are taking sides and did not want that kind of discord here and did not want to favor one side or the other. His desire was for everyone to be happy and a work place has to be created that is conducive or they will leave and management should be the one keeping everyone happy. He said he would really like management to come back to the authority at a future meeting indicating what they have done to address the issues. It is not the authority's business to referee. Mr. Eatman indicated labor negotiations are not the authority's responsibility and is management's job. Mr. Coleman stated Transdev should work this out noting if the authority gets dragged into it all that can be done is look at the contract. He reiterated TransDev should take care of this. Mr. Coleman stressed we are supposed to be growing this system. Chairman Horne agreed that the only lever the authority can pull is the contract with TransDev. Discussion followed regarding the software and how it generates runs.

Mr. Spencer explained what he gathered from the ad hoc meeting is there is a difference of opinion of what seniority means noting there is a contract version involving a certain number of employees that have been there for a long time and get to pick their run first. There is a feeling there are other benefits of seniority. There are certain limitations to the new software noting not working on week ends is not written into the contract. He had a conversation with a driver who has been with the company for 10 years who likes his route and is happy with it. He asked the driver what should change for him to stay and he indicated everyone has to get use to the changes. There are two things the drivers agree on – determining how to unify their voices as drivers and the need to put their voices somewhere. Ms. McCullers shared with him the last meeting that her time on the authority last time was up and there were no takers and no one wants to be on this board. He stated the authority cannot negotiate and appreciated Marie's work stressing this is not an easy job and will not get any easier. Lessons have been learned for next time to help everyone move forward together. Ms. Parker stated there are 208 positions total and they currently have 202 filled. She reviewed the difficulty in filling the positions and noted every senior person gets to pick their schedule. Mr. Eatman stated the software is doing what it should but there is a learning curve involved. In response to questioning, Chairman Horne stated if this board continues to hear from people not being happy, the board can review the vendor.

Mr. Stevenson indicated part of the vendor's performance evaluation could be to conduct a periodic survey of the feelings of staff. Mr. Spencer stated qualifications are based on customer satisfaction and driver's satisfaction.

Ms. Parker indicated all of the US systems got this software a long time ago; however, TransDev has a management contract and there are only 3 in the country that have management contract. Ms. Omokaiye asked if we can get someone from TransDev to attend an authority meeting noting it is important to have higher ups in the company available to talk about what is going on in other areas. She also requested a copy of the TransDev contract

Chairman Horne then referred to GoRaleigh Station's unheated bathrooms. He noted they are actually heated but involves the question of the doors being open. He noted it is an open air station. Mr. Stevenson indicated in looking at other facilities, it is quite common for public facilities to have restrooms without doors and did not find that abnormal. Mr. Eatman reviewed the operation of the station noting the facility cannot be enclosed as this would involve a huge budget.

Chairman Horne referred to the mechanical shop concern and noted everything has been addressed or is in the process of being addressed.

In regard to stops being unsafe for passengers, the committee decided to discuss that at this meeting.

Mr. Walker referred to a memo provided to members regarding an update on the Southeast Raleigh stop locations and lighting. He explained staff submitted approximately 28 sites along Poole, Barwell and Rock Quarry Roads for full ADA accessible sites. The sites have been designed and are currently in the Real Estate department and NCDOT for ROW and Encroachment access. There are also three 2016 Bond roadway projects in the same areas. Staff has submitted for Temporary construction sites in the Bond Project areas to make improvements ahead of the roadway projects. A listing of the sites, locations, status and timelines were reviewed and pointed out on a map along Poole Road, Barwell Road and Rock Quarry Road. Mr. Spencer asked if there is any way to get better lighting getting to the stops. Mr. Walker indicated staff can work with Traffic Engineering and the Street Lighting Program staff where we have dark spots. Street lights are generally installed in 2-3 weeks when requests come in. Mr. Eatman indicated our goal is safety and reliability and the City relies on the private sector to install most lights during construction. He indicated staff will bring back to the Route Committee this issue and remove it from the Ad Hoc Committee concerns.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE – REPORT RECEIVED**

Mr. Pecoraro reported the Finance and Policy Committee met on February 6, 2019 and made the following recommendations.

#### **Free Fare for Federal Furloughed Workers**

Mr. Pecoraro reported staff recommended the adoption of a free fare for all furloughed Federal Workers during times of government shutdown through June 30, 2019. Federal workers would only need to show their Federal ID to bus drivers as they board the bus for a free trip. Staff would work with GoRaleigh operations to ensure that the fare free policy is communicated when and if another government shutdown occurs. Mr. Pecoraro reported the Committee recommended approval. Mr. Pecoraro moved that furloughed Federal workers receive free trips as outlined. His motion was seconded by Mr. Spencer, unanimously passed. Chairman Horne ruled the motion adopted.

#### **GoRaleigh Monthly Pass (Fare Reduction)**

Mr. Pecoraro reported the Committee reviewed reducing the monthly pass from \$45 to \$40 noting there doesn't seem to be a loss of revenue. Mr. Pecoraro moved approval of the reduced monthly pass fares as outlined. His motion was seconded by Mr. Stevenson, unanimously passed. Chairman Horne ruled the motion adopted.

#### **RFQ for On-Call Professional and Technical Transit Services**

Mr. Pecoraro indicated the Committee reviewed this item noting the recommendation was based on the analysis of the proposal. Mr. Eatman explained the planning communities help with some of our MPO and other related planning activities. They have performed very well in the past. After staff reviewing at the 3 proposals, Planning Community was at the top. They have been very valuable in having federal expertise. Defining contract language will come to the Finance Committee. This relates to planning related activities. Mr. Pecoraro reported the Committee was in agreement with staff and moved approval of Planning Community. His motion was seconded by Mr. Spencer, unanimously passed. Chairman Horne ruled the motion adopted.

### **PERFORMANCE REPORTS – RECEIVED**

Members received in their agenda packets the following staff reports:

1. Statement of Income (December 2018)

2. Variance Analysis (December 2018)
3. Go PASS Ridership Summary (December 2018)
4. Go PASS Ridership by Agency (December 2018)
5. Accessible Raleigh Transportation Summary (December 2018)
6. Operating Statistics (December 2018)
7. Route Statistics (December 2018)
8. Ridership Percentage by Time Period (December 2018)
9. Evaluation by Route (December 2018)
10. On time Performance Report (December 2018)
11. Monthly Talking Points (February 2019)

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Hunt